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Conference News and Announcements

Campaign Update:

"CAMPAIGN KICKED-OFF!"
 (Use Campaign Logo)

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds." (Romans 12:2)

The Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ would like to announce the formal kickoff of the **SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE "TRANSFORMING CHURCHES-TRANSFORMING LIVES"** campaign, which will provide funds for:

1. **Building Covenant and Connection**
2. **Building Leaders**
3. **Building Congregations**

All these needs and plans will be thoroughly explained in the brochure and video that are now being assembled. The brochures and video will be delivered to each congregation by the visiting clergy-lay team.

The decision to undertake this project is the result of planning and discussion that have taken place throughout the past few years. As we begin our 43rd year as a conference, we are faced with new challenges and opportunities that require the faith and vision of all our members. For this reason, the delegates from our 51 congregations voted at our annual meeting in June 2009 to proceed with the Southeast Conference campaign to raise a minimum of \$1,400,000 with a challenge goal of \$3,800,000 over the next five years. We are very grateful to the members of the Campaign Steering Committee who agreed to serve:

- Rev. Kathy Clark - Alto, GA
- Rev. Susannah Davis - Atlanta, GA
- Ms. Barbara Everett - Pleasant Hill, TN
- Ms. Bette Graves Thomas - Atlanta, GA
- Rev. Susan Mitchell - Stone Mountain, GA
- Rev. Gary Myers - Trussville, AL
- Ms. Ginny Nixon - Pleasant Hill, TN
- Ms. Vanessa Robbs - Chattanooga, TN
- Mr. John Stewart - Knoxville, TN
- Rev. Cameron Trimble - Marietta, GA
- Mr. Bob Watson - Decatur, GA

We also are pleased to announce that Ambassador **Andrew Young**, member of **First Congregational Church UCC, Atlanta**, has agreed to be the honorary chairperson for the campaign. The **Rev. Susan Mitchell**, Associate Pastor of the **Rush Memorial Congregational UCC, Atlanta**, and Mr. **Bob Watson**, a member of **Central Congregational UCC, Atlanta**, have agreed to serve as the general co-chairpersons of the campaign.

Serving as area co-chairpersons are **Rev. Dorinda Broadnax** and **Deacon Joseph Thornton**, Alabama / Mississippi Area Co-Chairpersons; **Rev. Susannah Davis** and **Ms. Bette Graves Thomas**, Georgia / South Carolina Area Co-Chairpersons; and **Rev. John Gill** and **John Stewart**, Tennessee Area Co-Chairpersons. **Mr. Jim Crabb** and **Ms. Debbie Spearman** have joined the campaign team as Special Gifts Co-Chairpersons.

In announcing the Campaign Volunteer Organization, Rev. Mitchell and Mr. Watson said, "At this early stage of the campaign, we are most pleased with the quality of leadership that has agreed to serve and feel it is indicative of the success that we expect to achieve in this appeal. We are thankful to all the volunteers for



Listen to the 2008 Podcasts with leaders making a difference in the UCC.

Theology Among the People



Check out our Lay Theology Program called "TAP", Theology Among the People. [Click here.](#)



Need books, videos or other resources for your church?

Contact the Resource Connection [here.](#)



Are you interested in starting a new church or being a part of a new church start? Click [here](#) to learn more about our Church Development program.



Stay in touch with the work of our national Justice and Witness ministry. Click [here](#) to support this ministry.

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www.ucc.org

their commitment of time and talent to the campaign, which will strengthen the future of the Southeast Conference."

The Church Gifts Division will kickoff on November 10, 2009. This phase of the campaign will include all the churches in the conference. The conference asks all congregations to delay making their decisions about their commitments to the campaign until they have been contacted by the teams from their area who can thoroughly educate and inform each church about the campaign.

The Campaign Steering Committee and the Conference Board of Directors ask each church to cooperate in allowing the team an opportunity to present the program to each church's governing body (consistory, council, etc.). We are hopeful that each church will consider participating at the **highest** possible level in order to ensure the campaign's success. Spreading the congregation's commitment over a five to seven year pledge period will enable each congregation to make a **maximum** contribution with a **minimum** of financial strain. Churches are encouraged to take a serious look at their local needs in order to conduct a combined local church/conference campaign. Fundraising workshops are being scheduled for next year. Fundraising counsel also is available to discuss your church's fundraising objectives. Please call the campaign office at (800) 903-1535 and ask for Steve Havey, Campaign Consultant.

Questions about the campaign also can be answered by calling the campaign office or by emailing campaign@secucc.org.

Theology Among the People (TAP) UPDATE:

(insert TAP Picture here)

The Southeast Conference has a longstanding commitment to "equipping the saints for ministry" and continues to provide lay theological education, training for licensed ministers, and clergy continuing education in a variety of venues. Perhaps the best known is the Theology Among the People (TAP) program. Begun by Dr. Richard Sales as an outgrowth of his work providing theological education by extension in the mission fields of Southern Africa, TAP celebrates its 10th anniversary in the Southeast Conference this year. The purpose of TAP is to bring theology into the midst of the people of God to equip them for the work of ministry and the building up of the Body of Christ. It does so through a 10-course curriculum focusing on Biblical interpretation, theological reflection, and practice in the arts of ministry, as well as periodic convocations and global theological education immersion experiences. In its 10 years as a mission of the Southeast Conference, TAP has touched the lives of more than 100 participants and most of the congregations in our conference.

The TAP program continues to grow this fall with the start of new groups and the continuation of old ones following a summer break. With the graduation in June 2009 of TAP participants from **Victory UCC in Stone Mountain, GA**; and **Holy Trinity Community UCC, Brookmeade Congregational UCC**, and **Howard Congregational UCC in Nashville, TN**, members of these churches have taken no time to start up again with record numbers of participants. The Nashville TAP group, which meets at Holy Trinity UCC, began on September 15 with 14 members. The Victory TAP group will begin on October 1. Groups are continuing to meet at **Beloved Community UCC in Birmingham, AL**; **Bethany Congregational UCC in Thomasville, GA**; **Garden of Grace UCC in Columbia, SC**; **Pleasant Hill Community UCC in Pleasant Hill, TN**; and **First Congregational UCC, Talladega, AL**. There also is interest in starting a TAP group in Savannah, GA. Kathy Clark, Associate Conference Minister and Director of the TAP program, will conduct an informational meeting at First Congregational UCC in Savannah on Thursday, October 15 at 4 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

In addition to new TAP groups, there are several new facilitators, the backbone of the program. They allow the conference to extend its reach to all corners of its associations, making TAP a presence in local contexts and connecting our churches across our wide geography. **Linda Miner** in Birmingham, AL; **Anita Hauenstein** of Nashville, TN; and Bryan Jones of Stone Mountain, GA are among those who have joined the ranks of the more than 20 trained and dedicated volunteer facilitators, to whom the conference and participants are extremely grateful.

An exciting development this fall is the introduction of web-based technology to enhance the TAP program. Members of the Bethany Congregational UCC TAP group in Thomasville, GA have agreed to pilot this project. With grant money from the national setting of the UCC, they purchased a laptop computer for the church and installed high-speed wireless Internet service. Using web-based video teleconferencing and webinar formats, Kathy Clark is able to serve as their

facilitator without having to travel 12 hours round trip each week to be present physically. This use of technology will not replace face-to-face facilitation, but will enhance connectivity while conserving resources.

For further information or to inquire about starting a TAP program in your area, please visit the website at www.secucc.org or contact Kathy Clark at kclark@secucc.org.

Friends of the Conference Campaign Continues

The conference has initiated a campaign inviting all who wish to make a special individual contribution to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM), Basic Support, a TAP scholarship, or a new church start to do so. Checks may be sent to the conference office, made out to Southeast Conference, UCC, with the memo noting "Friends of the Conference." Please designate whether the gift is to be designated to TAP, NCD or OCWM Basic Support. For a gift of \$150.00 or more, we will send you a conference bag as a token of our thanks!

Alabama-Tennessee Association Fall Meeting

The Alabama-Tennessee Association held its fall meeting at First Congregational Christian UCC in Birmingham, AL September 25-26, welcoming more than 70 people to an event celebrating the global ministries of the United Church of Christ. Music for the worship was provided by Oikos, a jazz group from Cleveland, OH, and both worship and program featured the missions of our denomination in Southern Africa, Angola, Palestine, Japan, India, Cuba, Latin America, and many others settings. Through storytelling and workshops, we were led to places where lives have been transformed and justice fully lived. We were honored to welcome John Mobley, Regional Minister for the Alabama Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), who helped us recognize that the work we do around the world we do in partnership with the Disciples.

Georgia-South Carolina Association Schedules Spring Meeting

At its recent executive committee meeting, the Georgia-South Carolina Association decided not to hold a fall meeting. The executive committee instead will call each of the congregations of the association to express appreciation for their covenant with the association, and ask if there are ways in which the association could be more present to them. **The annual meeting of the association will be held in the Atlanta area on Saturday, April 24, 2010.** Please circle the date!

East Alabama-West Georgia Annual Meeting

The association will hold its annual meeting at Oak Grove Christian Church, UCC, Pine Mountain, GA, October 10 from 9:30 a.m.-12 noon (EST). The program will feature Kathy Clark speaking on "New Paths to Discernment for Ministry: the UCC Engages in Formation for Ministry for the Emerging UCC."

Southeast Conference Back Bay Mission Work Camp Full!

Under the leadership of **Connie and Bob Waidmann**, the Southeast Conference Disaster Assistance Relief Team has a total of 30 people signed up for the first Southeast Conference work camp in several years. The work camp will be at the Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, MS, November 29- December 5. There are still places available for people with specific construction-related skills.

Posted on October 2, 2009

This Fall the Conference Comes Alive!

A leading emphasis this fall will be our continued engagement of the **Campaign to Expand the Mission and Ministry of the Conference** by securing support from our congregations to Build Covenant and Connection, Build Leadership and Build Congregations. Our challenge goal for this campaign is \$3.8 million, and our minimum goal is \$1.4 million. Ambassador **Andrew Young**, member of **First Congregational UCC, Atlanta**, has offered to serve as Honorary Chair of the campaign, and the General Chairs are **Rev. Susan Mitchell of Rush Memorial UCC, Atlanta**, and **Bob Watson of Central Congregational UCC, Atlanta**. There will be a recruitment of teams of visitors to present the story to each of the 51 churches in the conference, and to make an invitation for them to be a part of the effort to expand the ministries of the conference over the next decade.

2009 Fall Association Meetings

Our three associations have scheduled their fall meetings. Alabama-Tennessee

Association will meet in Birmingham September 25-26, East Alabama-West Georgia on October 10th in Pine Mountain, GA, and Georgia-South Carolina, on October 17th, in Atlanta.

Celebrating the Hopes and Dreams of Our Global Village

**United Church of Christ
Alabama/Tennessee Association, Southeast Conference
Fall Gathering
First Congregational Church, 1024 Center Street, North
Birmingham, Alabama 35304
featuring
Global Ministries
United Church of Christ and Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**

Highlights

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2009

4:00 p.m. Registration Check-in
4:15– 5:45 p.m. Documentary showing and discussion *Library*
Life in Occupied Palestine
Eyewitness Stories and Photos by Anna Baltzer
6:00 p.m. Dinner *Fellowship Hall*
7:00 p.m. *Global Village Celebration Sanctuary*
Featuring the Oikos Ensemble
SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 26
7:30 a.m. Breakfast *Fellowship Hall*
8:30 Mission Alive *Worship Sanctuary*
10:00 – 11:50 Mission Discussions

...Directions, accommodations, and more details available by contacting Don Clark at clarkjd@frontiernet.net

**EAST ALABAMA WEST GEORGIA ASSOCIATION
Annual Meeting
Oak Grove Christian Church, UCC, Pine Mountain, GA
October 10, 2009
9:30 (EST) Gathering, Breakfast--12:30 Adjourn following lunch**

**Program: Rev. Kathy Clark
“New Paths to Discernment for Ministry; the UCC Engages in
Formation for Ministry for the Emerging UCC”**

The Southeast Conference is taking a leading role under the guidance of Associate Conference Minister Kathy Clark in living into the Multiple Paths to Ministry which was taken to the next level of implementation by actions of the Grand Rapids General Synod when it voted the necessary changes to the Constitution and Bylaws to implement multiple paths. The Georgia-South Carolina Association is hosting a workshop on November 7th in Atlanta for licensed ministers of the Southeast Conference to provide them an overview of the process of becoming a member in discernment by developing a portfolio organized around the marks of a faithful and effective ministry.

**Georgia-South Carolina Association
Annual Meeting
October 17th, 2009
10:00–3:00pm**

Keep an eye open for program details and agenda

Conference Minister and Secretary Bette Graves Thomas to Attend Regional Meeting



September 14-15 the conference ministers of each of the conferences in the Southern Region, with their moderators will gather for a meeting in Tampa, the purpose of which is to explore future collaborations among conferences in this region. The lay representative from our conference will be Bette Graves Thomas, the secretary of our Board. The conferences of this region are Southern Conference (North Carolina and tidewater Virginia), Southeast, Florida, and South Central (Louisiana, Texas and the Mississippi coast). As conferences face the challenges of ministry in a time of diminished resources, we are beginning to find new ways to collaborate around

program and staffing. The Southeast Conference provides consultation on new church development to Southern, Florida and South Central. We will look at this at the first step toward encouraging additional exploration of how we can strengthen each other.

Friends of the Conference Program—Get a “Thank You!” Gift

The Board of Directors of the Southeast Conference has initiated a “Friends of the Conference” program through which individuals who want to support specific ministries will have an opportunity to do so. If you wish to make a \$150 contribution to the TAP Program, to OCWM (Our Church’s Wider Mission), or to support the work of a specific new church start send a check to Friends of the Southeast Conference, 1330 West Peachtree Street, NW, Suite #350, Atlanta, GA 30309, Attn: Tim Downs, and we will send you a beautiful canvas briefcase with the logo of the Friends of the Conference campaign embroidered on it.

Southeast Conference Partners with National UCC in Sponsoring the New Church Leadership Institute in Atlanta

The very successful New Church Leadership Institute was held at Emory University August 3-7 with over 150 pastors from across the UCC coming to participate in an expanded program which this year invited not only new church start pastors, but pastors of renewing congregations as well.

Workshops led by leading experts in the areas of new church development and congregational vitality were present. Associate Conference Minister **Cameron Trimble** has provided the executive support and direction for the development of this program. The Southeast Conference was well represented with pastors from a number of our congregations participating.



Posted on September 14, 2009

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